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31 October 1962

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McCone

The attached memorandum and maps spell out in detail the answers to some of your questions relating to the chronology on Cuban overflights.

Of particular importance are the following factors:

I. After SAM sites were first discovered and immediately on the heels of a U-2 which violated the Soviet Far East (7 September) ^{30 August} and the loss of the [redacted] (8 September) a meeting was held in 25X1 USAF Bundy's office on 10 September to discuss the question of Cuban reconnaissance. We wanted to overfly all SAM sites not believed to be then operational and all areas of Cuba which had not been covered in the recent past. Because of growing concern for the safety of U-2 operations, however, it was the sense of the meeting (particularly Secretary Rusk) that CIA would be permitted to make four flights against Cuba; two peripheral and two overflights. The overflights were limited to Banes, a coastal defense ^{missile} ~~level~~ site in Eastern Cuba and the area around Guantanamo. We were given permission to overfly the Isle of Pines in the course of one of the two peripherals.

II. The Agency made the operational determination that none of these flights would be made unless weather along the flight routes was less than 25 per cent overcast. The first of the four flights was made on 26 September; the last one on 7 October. You will note that weather was sometimes satisfactory during this interval and that flights were not made. This is explained by the fact that as each of the four approved flights was made we were looking for specific delimited weather breaks in areas to be covered by the approved flights not yet flown.

III. SAC became responsible for U-2 operations over Cuba on 12 October. Its first mission on 14 October was planned to fly over two

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[redacted]
of Havana which COMOR suspected to be an area of possible missile activity. In the course of the flight, the SAC pilot (the pilot was not the one later killed) photographed this suspect area and turned up the first MRBM.

~~TOP SECRET~~

IV. There never was a stand down of Cuban operations. It is true that we were inhibited by the guidelines set down at the 10 September meeting, but the only stand down was [redacted] where all reconnaissance operations have been grounded since the [redacted]

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V. The peripheral flights did turn up additional SAM sites and coastal defense cruise-missile sites, but that's about all.

Be sure to see the map attached at the very back of this package. It shows the kind of coverage CIA wanted at the meeting on 10 September as compared with what we were actually permitted to do.

[redacted]
H. Knoche

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